

From: Hubbard, Joseph
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1 — Texas Leading Challenge to New Smog Standards, Texas Tribune, 6/26/2015

<http://www.texastribune.org/2015/06/26/texas-leading-fight-against-new-smog-standards/>

Intent on wringing more smog from the nation's skies, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is just months away from imposing new ozone standards meant to lessen pollution from the nation's cars, factories and power plants widely believed to worsen asthma, lung and heart disease. The impending restrictions have already drawn the wrath of Republican leaders, who have trotted out studies portending economic doom.

2 – Which oil and gas companies are leaking the most methane?, ClimateWire, 6/26/2015

<http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/2015/06/26/stories/1060020954>

Over the years, ConocoPhillips -- an energy company so rich that it earns as much in a year as Croatia -- has positioned itself as a good guy among its peers when it comes to greenhouse gas pollution. It is a member of a U.N.-led initiative to reduce emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas that is the primary component of natural gas. In the United States, it is a longtime participator in U.S. EPA's voluntary program to curb methane leaks. In January, Ryan Lance, CEO of ConocoPhillips, said in Washington, D.C., that the industry is working diligently to tackle the problem.

3 – Railroad Commission Executive Director to Retire, Texas Tribune, 6/25/2015

<http://www.texastribune.org/2015/06/25/railroad-commission-executive-director-step-down/>

Texas' oil and gas regulator is losing one of its leaders. Milton Rister, executive director of the Texas Railroad Commission, plans to leave the agency on Aug. 31, according to a letter he sent to commissioners Wednesday. The former Republican political operative and aide to former Gov. Rick Perry will depart after nearly three years in the position.

4 — Texas project files for expanded LNG license, Energywire, 6/26/2015

<http://www.eenews.net/energywire/2015/06/26/stories/1060020935>

Developers of a liquefied natural gas export plant under construction in Texas have filed with regulators to export more of the fuel than currently permitted, reflecting an upgrade from "conservative" production assumptions used in previous planning. Freeport LNG's request, filed last week, would upgrade the operational permit for its Quintana Island plant by just under 20 percent, from 657 billion cubic feet per year (Bcf/y) of production to 782 Bcf/y.

5 — New safety rules for South Texas pipeline inspectors mandate "buddy system," quicker gun licenses, Fuel Fix, 6/24/2015

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2015/06/24/new-safety-rules-for-south-texas-pipeline-inspectors-mandate-buddy-system-quicker-gun-licenses/#31363101=0>

The Texas Railroad Commission rolled out new security measures to protect its employees patrolling South Texas' energy infrastructure after they voiced concerns about their safety, the state's oil and gas regulator said. The policy changes follow complaints by Commission Chairman David Porter that the federal government had failed to protect pipeline rights-of-way from becoming pathways for illegal immigration and cartel activity.

6 – Imminent High Court Mercury Ruling Could Have Major Impact on GHG Rule, Inside EPA, 6/25/2015

<http://insideepaclimate.com/climate-daily-news/imminent-high-court-mercury-ruling-could-have-major-impact-ghg-rule>

The Supreme Court's imminent ruling over EPA's power plant mercury regulation could have a significant impact on a threshold legal challenge to the agency's rule governing plants' greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, especially if the high court vacates the mercury rule, as the move would undercut a key challenge from some states and industry.

7 – McCabe Says EPA to Address Interim Goals In 'Mid-Summer' Clean Power Plan Release, BNA, 6/25/2015

http://news.bna.com/deln/DELNWB/split_display.adp?fedfid=71494033&vname=dennotallissues&jd=a0g8y7q4u3&split=0

The Environmental Protection Agency still intends to finalize its proposal to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from the nation's fleet of existing power plants by "mid-summer" and be responsive to the issues raised in 4.3 million public comments, Janet McCabe, the agency's top air official, said June 25. In particular, the agency has focused on whether to adjust interim targets for emissions reductions—many states have argued their initial goals were too aggressive—in specific cases, how it treated nuclear power, how reductions achieved through renewable energy and energy efficiency would be counted and the overall timing on the proposal, according to McCabe, acting assistant administrator for air and radiation.

8 – McCarthy to promote climate action on Bill Maher's show, EE News, 6/25/2015

<http://www.eenews.net/eenewspm/2015/06/25/stories/1060020918>

U.S. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy goes on HBO's "Real Time With Bill Maher" tomorrow to mark the second anniversary of President Obama's Climate Action Plan. EPA said today McCarthy would discuss a new agency report that shows a global effort to keep climate change to no more than 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels would boost the U.S. economy.

9 – Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines and St. Charles flood maps months away, Times Picayune, 6/25/2015

http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2015/06/jefferson_st_bernard_plaquemin.html#incart_most_shared-environment

Preliminary flood insurance rate maps for Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines and St. Charles parishes are still months away from being completed, a Federal Emergency Management Agency official said Thursday (June 25). On Wednesday, the agency began the formal appeals process for preliminary maps for New Orleans, after reaching agreement with New Orleans officials on base flood elevations

10 – Enforcement office defends right to keep its guns, Greenwire, 6/25/2015

<http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2015/06/25/stories/1060020902>

A senior official in U.S. EPA's enforcement office has authored a defense of the agency's right to hold and use firearms for its criminal investigations. Mike Fisher, the legal division director for EPA's Office of Criminal Enforcement, Forensics & Training, wrote in a recent op-ed that the agency's authority to have its agents carry guns has had support from both parties for decades and is still very much needed today.

11 – Why Oklahoma Had the Nation's Highest Percentage Of Bee Deaths Last Year, NPR, 6/25/2015

<http://stateimpact.npr.org/oklahoma/2015/06/25/why-oklahoma-had-the-nations-highest-percentage-of-bee-deaths-last-year/>

Honeybees are dying at an alarming rate across the country, but no state lost a greater percentage of its bees than Oklahoma over the last year. When it comes to the general public, there's a lot of mystery around this issue, but the reasons are becoming more clear.

12 – There's a giant hole that's draining a lake on the border of Oklahoma and Texas like it's a bathtub, Business Insider, 6/24/15

<http://www.businessinsider.com/giant-vortex-draining-lake-texoma-2015-6>

Like something straight out of "The Twilight Zone", a swirling vortex has opened up in a giant lake on the border of Oklahoma and Texas. The gaping hole — which appeared recently in Lake Texoma — alarmed everyone from Twitter users to the Tulsa District US Army Corps of Engineers, who posted a YouTube video of the vortex. Below the video, they describe the hole as being "8 feet in diameter and capable of sucking in a full-sized boat."

13 – Intervenor taking exception to OG&E's \$1.1 billion environmental compliance plan, Tulsa World, 6/25/15

http://www.tulsaworld.com/business/energy/intervenors-taking-exception-to-og-e-s-billion-environmental-compliance/article_1b7cbfdd-ac13-5857-9aa9-043a302726b3.html

With 13 outside parties involved in Oklahoma Gas & Electric Co.'s \$1.1 billion case before state regulators, someone was bound to be disappointed by this month's report and recommendations from an administrative law judge. More than half of the parties have filed appeals — called exceptions — that will be heard Thursday before the three-person Corporation Commission in Oklahoma City.

14 — Congress probing California oil spill that blackened beaches, fuel fix, 6/25/15

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2015/06/25/congress-probing-california-oil-spill-that-blackened-beaches/>

A congressional committee has opened a probe into a California oil spill that blackened beaches and created a 9-mile ocean slick last month. The House Energy and Commerce Committee on Thursday asked the pipeline operator for detailed information on maintenance of the failed line and inspection records.

Best,

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